

The Honorable Michael K. Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to you today as a current satellite TV subscriber who would like to add my voice of support to the pending merger of EchoStar and DIRECTV .. The combination of these two satellite providers will provide numerous benefits to consumers like me, including more choices in channels, programming, broadband and new television technologies.

By merging, the combined company will be a much stronger competitor to cable television and can offer more programming choices and, most importantly, all local TV channels in every market in the U.S. By providing local TV channels everywhere, this merger will make satellite television a strong alternative to cable in our community. Throughout the country, people will now be able to turn to satellite TV to access their local news, weather and community information, in addition to a comprehensive package of national video programming. But just as exciting, the merger will bring the availability of affordable high-speed Internet service by satellite to over 40 million Americans who don't have high-speed Internet access. These tremendous benefits to consumers won't happen without the merger. Satellite-delivered Internet service will bring an affordable and competitive alternative to cable modems and DSL to consumers in big cities, small towns and rural areas alike. This will give me a competitive choice for Internet access and will be especially advantageous to rural communities where cable modems and DSL are not likely to be available anytime in the near future.

My additional two bits. Having grown up in a world of Free television, rabbit ears, and with luck 3 channels to choose from I find it appalling that cable companies continue to raise rates at astronomical rates each year and yet the gain for me as an Ex-cable subscriber was limited at best. As a Satellite subscriber my rates remain unchanged and in fact I have Gained considerable channel selection (but lost local channels), high quality music with a wide range of styles. Even with extra channel subscriptions added to my monthly bill I still pay almost 25% LESS than I would for cable. This merger can be nothing but a good thing from where I sit, and given the problems with my Only alternative Adelphia, I would find it highly Irresponsible and short sighted if this merger were not allowed to happen.

In the interest of improving our access to competitive television and Internet service, I Strongly urge you to lend your support to this merger.

Sincerely,

William Sprano Jr
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